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THE SECRETS OF B'MOUTH.

May. Friday.—Lovely. Town beginning to be delightful,—but for dust; but for water-carts; but for—"not to put too fine a point upon it"—drours. Let us away. Where? South, to the rhododendrons. B'mouth; just *the* time now to spend happy days here. Not too hot for Royal Tepid Bath Hotel, B'mouth. Gardens lovely. Sea of a true Mediterranean blue. Air—gentle, refreshing. North-Easterly. No crowd now. But at Whitsuntide, everything will be Whitsuntidy. What I take in the way of holiday I prefer "neat." Per L. & S. W., and comfortable Pullman car. Song:—

As we sit in our Pullman car,
A smoking our fine cigar,
The paper we read
While we go at full speed
In our equable Pullman car.

Good dinner at R. T. B. hostelrie. Excellent English asparagus for home consumption. Might dine as vegetarians on this food, with motto, "All flesh is grass." Ask what is going on? Answer, Nothing in particular. Try to find notices, advertisements, or bills. Can't. Good idea this for hotel. *Happy Thought.*—Don't give any intimation of what's going on outside. *Then* visitors will remain inside.

Next Morning.—Still lovely, or lovelier. Down early. Breakfast. Lounge. Admire, at distance, steamer departing from pier, to go, as far as I remember—which is not going so very far, after all—to Swanage and back. Lots of steamers do this in course of day. I affirm this, with reservation, to my friends, who rely on my information, as "knowing the place."

I tell them we shall find all information posted up on or about pier. Entrance to pier 2*d*. It used to be a penny. Unwise proceeding this. If it's only a penny you pay without thinking. But if it's twopence you think twice. Then, to equalise it, you go earlier and stay double as long as you used to do for a penny. "Pennywise twopence foolish" policy this. When does band play? No notice visible. What does band play when it *does* play? Nobody knows. This is one of the Secrets of B'mouth! There may be a boy with programmes. Don't see him. Another secret. Subsequently hear band, but see no boy and get no programme.

How about the steamboat trips to Swanage? Delightful idea; over to Swanage and back for a blow. Inquire of ancient mariner with gold band round his nautical cap. Boat to Swanage? Oh, gone an hour or more ago. Then that was the steamer I was admiring in the distance. When's the next? He is reticent personally, but refers me to the board. Evidently another Secret of B'mouth. I cannot find any mention of any boat going to Swanage until next Monday morning, by which time I shall have left. "Too late! too late!" I return to my nautical authority in gold-banded cap. "Yes," says he briefly, but politely, "steamer to Swanage at three, and back here by 5.15."

"Excellent well, i' faith," I return, and my party repeat this expression of delight in chorus. "But, pardon me, thou ancient gold-banded mariner; is the fact of the boat leaving at three a secret known to you only, and, it may be, to one or two others?"

"Nay," replies mine ancient, "'tis advertised, and ye will find it up on the notice board."

Politely we refer him back to his own authority. He walks to the board, and, after close and thorough inspection, he is taken aback.

"Marry come up!" quoth the old sea-dog, his timbers shivering under the shock; "but, *it ain't been put in!*" And, sure enough, the announcement of the departure of the second boat that day had been omitted, and but for the mere accident of our curiosity, its departure would have remained unknown to all, and would have been hereafter reckoned as among the Secrets of B'mouth.

Swanage deferred. If the mountain would not come to MAHOMET we know what happened. But here the case is reversed; as thus, the *raison d'être* of Swanage is luncheon and lobster; and if you can get the lunch and the lobster without going to Swanage, so much the better for the consumer on the spot, and so much the worse for Swanage. The Royal Tepid Bath Hotel produces Swanage lobsters and lunch. *Ergo*, stay and enjoy the same without exertion. Subsequently the post-prandial pipe and the thirty-nine winks. Giant refreshed. Companion proposes Winter Garden (in Spring), where band under a GODFREY, not DAN, but one of his sons (*que nous Dansons!*), discourses lullingly, and an Ethiopian jangles sweet bells in tune. But even this is a Secret Entertainment, as, had it not been for the knowledge of the ways of the place possessed by one of our party, I should have missed this pleasantly soothing concert.

Then a stroll to the golf links. Here B'mouth sets an excellent example to all golf-linking seaside resorts. The public is admitted free. They can walk about, protected by nets from the whacks and thwacks of the stalwart ball-driving golfers: and if any one would play the game, he pays and plays.

B'mouth knows how to enjoy itself, and to make its visitors enjoy themselves. It lays out winter gardens, it gives first-rate concerts daily and nightly; it devises golf-links, croquet-grounds, bowling-greens, cricket-fields, and it sets up restaurants; and also provides for a rainy day with plenty of shelters.

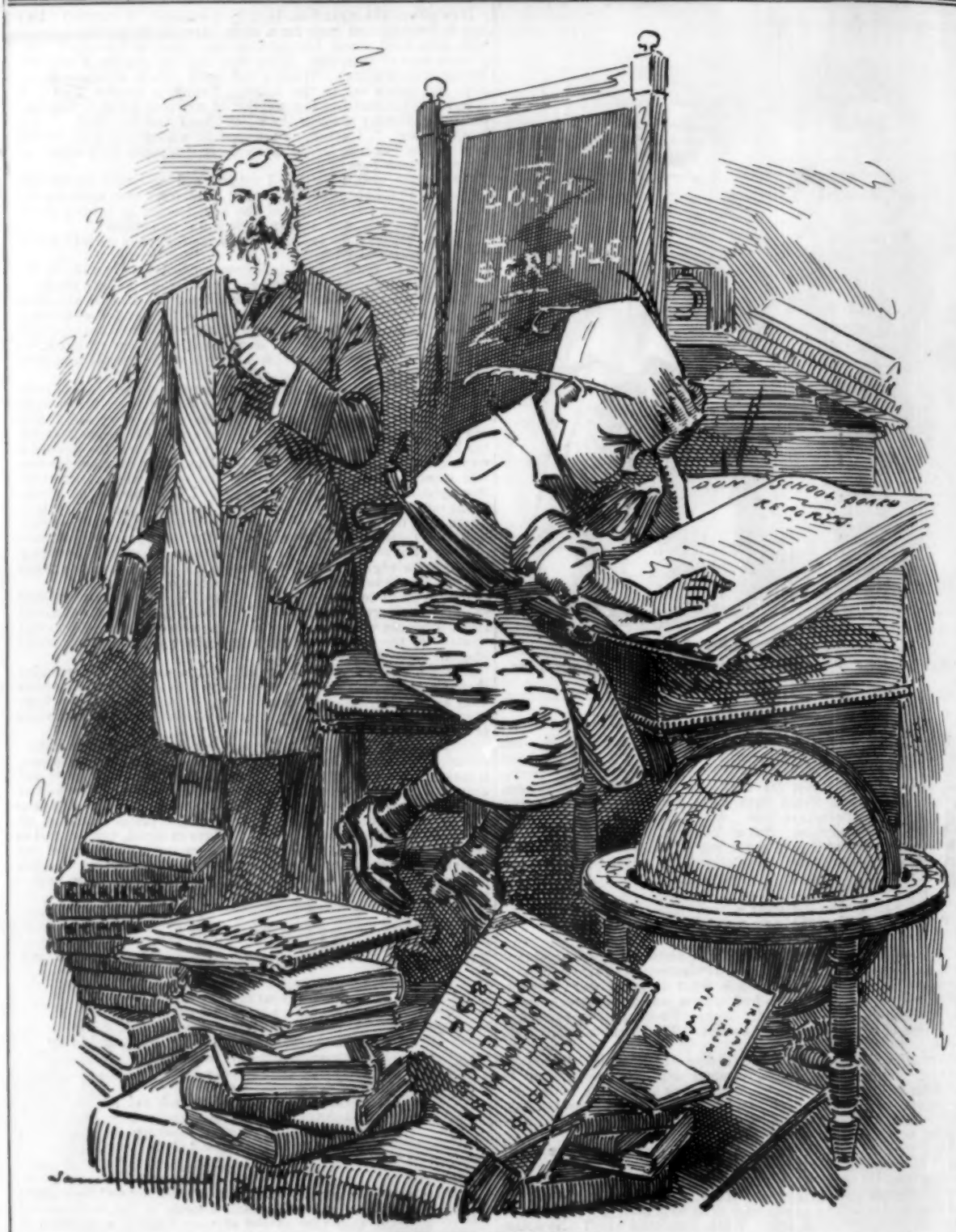
Only one fault have I to find with B'mouth, and that is its unprecedented modesty. For possessing, as it does, all these attractions, it makes no public boast of them; and it is only with difficulty and considerable enterprise that a stranger visiting this place for the first time can discover all these things. Publicity is required. But once you know B'mouth, there are few, very few places where, at all times and seasons, and on all days, Sundays excepted, you can find so much and so varied amusement; and where, taking for granted the climate agrees with you, so many happy days of living out of doors can be spent. I have been there and still would go. Also, will—when I can.

PUNCH TO JENNER.

[Thursday, May 14, was the centenary of the first vaccination by JENNER.]

OH, JENNER, each generous spirit
Will drink to your memory to-day!
From you what a boon we inherit,
What horrors you helped drive away!
'Gainst the curse which did maim, blind, and totter
Its thousands, you gave us a shield;
And until *they* can furnish a better,
Fanatics to wisdom must yield.
Let Leicester for harshness impeach us!
But, JENNER, just were it not jolly
If one of your *confrères* could teach us
To vaccinate fools—against folly?

THOU COMEST IN SUCH A QUESTIONABLE SHAPE.—"HOFF IFF'S orchestra" is announced. The band consists of IFF, with several 'ands. Whether they play or not at your house is a question of "If" you pay them and "If" they can come. Should you like their performance, you will indicate your desire for an *encore* by saying to the conductor, "IFF, you please." The house they hire during their stay in London will be entitled "*Le Château d'Iff.*"



THE HOLIDAY TASK.

Right Hon. Sir J-hn G-rst ("the Coach," to Master Education Bill). "IF YOU MEAN TO PASS THE COMMITTEE'S EXAMINATION, YOU MUST WORK, WORK, WORK!" *Aside.*) "AND SO MUST I!"

Amateur "Minimus Poet" (who has called at the office twice a week for three months). "COULD YOU USE A LITTLE POEM OF MINE?"
Editor (ruthlessly determined that this shall be his final visit). "OH, I THINK SO. THERE ARE TWO OR THREE BROKEN PANES OF GLASS, AND A HOLE IN THE SKYLIGHT. HOW LARGE IS IT?"

THE NORMAN-NERUDA-HALLÉ TESTIMONIAL.

ON Saturday last, at noon, Deputation was received by their Royal Highnesses the Prince of WALES and the Princess LOUISE, at Marlborough House.

Lord K-NT-RE, stepping forward, begged pardon on behalf of himself and friends for calling so early, and explained the object of the visit, namely, to present the famous *violiniste*. Lady HALLÉ, with a *châlet*, which he regretted he had not been able to bring with him, but it was still

The *châlet* in the valley,
Given to Lady HALLÉ.

He apologised for dropping into poetry, and promised their Royal Highnesses not to do so again. Also there was a casket modelled on the ancient Venetian ones left to *Portia* by her eccentric parent, containing title deeds, names of donors, with, as *Digby Grant* used to say, "a little cheque," and all sorts of nice things. When empty it could be used for a wine-cooler, a biscuit-box, a foot-warmer, or in fact for anything, it being as useful as ornamental. He would now proceed to open——

Here His Royal Highness intimated to Lord K-NT-RE that as he, Lord K-NT-RE, had already opened the proceedings, it must be left to him, the Prince, to open the casket.

Sir EDW-RD L-WS-N observed that this was the regular stage business in *The Merchant of Venice*. ("*Hear! Hear!*")

Mrs. A. L-W-S (Miss K-TE T-RRY) corroborated Sir EDW-RD, and said this was so. It was invariably the Prince who opened the box. (*Cheers.*)

Sir W-LL-M AGN-W hoped he might be permitted to say a few words. (The Royal assent having been given to this, Sir W-LL-M continued.)

He wished Lady HALLÉ many happy returns of the day. ("*Hear! Hear!*") He felt that he was strung up to concert-pitch (the only pitch that any one could touch and come out with clean hands), and as he did not on this occasion wish to play first fiddle, he would abridge further observations. Lady HALLÉ had ever been true to herself, true to the best interests of her art—*toujours fidèle*—and he, as everybody else did, wished her many years of happiness, in perfect harmony, without any variations. (*Applause.*)

Mr. ALFR-D DE R-THSCH-LD hoped he might be allowed to convey his deepest sentiments of esteem for Lady HALLÉ, the recipient of the testimonial. He begged to say that he had had the great pleasure and honour of her personal acquaintance for many years, and though Lady HALLÉ was "*Née ruder*," yet to everybody the eminent *violiniste* had always been most courteous,—*Nay polite*r he might say, and would have said, but that he strongly objected to anything at all resembling a pun. Playing on a violin was high art, but playing on a string of words was an art in which he (the speaker) had no desire to excel. He highly esteemed Lady HALLÉ for her excellent and various qualities—he might say her "*Stradi-varius*" qualities. ("*Hear! Hear!*") Wherever Lady HALLÉ played, it was a repetition of The Norman (Neruda) Conquest. (*Cheers.*) He expressed, he was sure, the feeling of the entire deputation in wishing long life, health, and happiness to Madame NORMAN NERUDA, Lady HALLÉ. (*Great applause.*)

The Prince of WALES then, in a few well chosen words, graciously summed up the whole case, including the casket, which His Royal Highness proceeded to open in State. This part of the ceremonial was most imposing—the gleaming of the swords, the brilliancy of the diamonds, the splendour of the costumes, the blaring of the trumpets and the beating of the drums, combining to impress on the memory, of those fortunate enough to be present, a scene the like of which not the most Oriental splendour could surpass.

Miss L-CY T-RRY L-W-S, as honorary secretary, was presented to their Royal Highnesses, who thanked her for her good services in the especially good cause. The deputation then retired to slow music.

[**** Since the above appeared in print, it has come to our knowledge that our reporter was not present. He has left the country. A detective is on his track.—ED.]

SCENE—*The Steps of Burlington House.*

Artist (*whose work has been hung not so well as he could have wished*). "AND WHAT ON EARTH HAVE THEY STUCK LORD ROBERTS UP HERE FOR?"

Brother Brush (*whose picture has been well hung and well sold*). "WHY, TO REMIND THE PUBLIC MY BOY, THAT THEY CAN'T GO IN WITHOUT PASSING *BOBS!*"

ROUNDABOUT READINGS.

TOM HOOD AS A POET. (*Contd.*)

I HAVE said that HOOD'S right to such immortality as poetry can confer comes from a comparatively small volume of literary "baggage." I do not mean that his output was small. No man, indeed, worked more assiduously at the literary business, for on the proceeds of what he did he had to provide bread for himself and his dear ones. But some of his chief and most immediate successes with the public were gained by him as a humorist, apt at the verbal contortions which CHARLES LAMB defended, and thereafter the public would have him chained to an oar in the punning galley. His wonderful feats therein are remembered for and against him even now, and it cannot be doubted that their fame has obscured the higher glory which is justly his as a true poet, a master of tragedy, humour, pathos, and music. Still, when all necessary deductions have been made, and when, in contemplating what remains, an appreciator can say to himself, "here there is no piece that is not worthy of the front rank," the amount left, though not surprisingly large, is of a quite extraordinary range and variety.

OF HOOD as a sonnetteer I have spoken, not, as I believe, with a higher enthusiasm than is due to his merits. But he fingered too, and with no untaught or wavering hand, the larger harp, which had been swept by KEATS and SHELLEY. I do not say that HOOD reached to the gusty heights of passion where SHELLEY controlled his whirlwinds and his lightnings, but some of SHELLEY'S magical music had been breathed into HOOD'S song. And of KEATS'S there was a still greater portion. Yet HOOD was, of course, no imitator. Every age has its own appropriate language of poetical expression, and as the Elizabethans, on the one hand, seemed to find a natural voice for their great thoughts in the mighty line that MARLOWE and SHAKSPEARE wrought to perfection, and, on the other hand, sported at leisure in the fascinating lyrics that may be found in Mr. A. H. BULLEN'S delightful book, so to SHELLEY KEATS, and HOOD there pertained in common a style in which their thoughts, even in their moments of highest exaltation, flowed with untroubled ease. The similitude must not be strained too far, but with due qualifications it unquestionably exists.

IN the "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," "Lycus, the Centaur," "Hero and Leander," and "The Two Peacocks of Bedfont," one may find not only the haunting melody and melancholy by which HOOD'S best work is marked, but also a perfection of expression, remarkable verbal felicity, and a singular power of painting a picture. It is difficult to select, but I venture to quote one verse from the first of these poems:—

Then next a fair Eve-Fay made meek address,
Saying, "We be the handmaids of the Spring,
In sign whereof, May, the quaint broideress,
Hath wrought her samplers on our gauzy wing.
We tend upon buds' birth and blossoming,
And count the leafy tributes that they owe—
As, so much to the earth—so much to fling
In showers to the brook—so much to go
In whirlwinds to the clouds that made them grow."

And throughout the pitiful plea of the fairies one finds the same dainty delicacy as of the timid rustle of many fluttering little wings on a cool and moonlit night.

AND, in a different strain, can anything be more touching and beautiful than "I Remember, I Remember," with its last verse that speaks straight to every heart:—

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

It is on this side that HOOD comes into relation with THACKERAY, and the tie grows stronger as one reads "A Retrospective Review" and "To ——, composed at Rotterdam." For instance:—

Then here it goes, a bumper—
The toast it shall be mine,
In Schiedam or in sherry,
Tokay, or hock of Rhine;
It well deserves the brightest
Where sunbeam ever swam—
"The girl I love in England"
I drink at Rotterdam.

IN these verses, as in every piece of verse he wrote, HOOD displays his remarkable mastery over words, his power of juggling with them, of adapting them, willy-nilly, to his purpose; of making them, as it were, dance to his music, and that too in a measure that seems the perfection of rhythmical ease. As in athletic exercises—in gymnastics let us say, or in oarsmanship—those who have the highest training and the best skill perform the hardest feats and do the soundest work with a grace and apparent lack of exertion that deceive the spectator; so in the exercise of words the great masters seem, without striving, to obtain just the right and necessary effect. And HOOD, whether we consider him as a punster or a poet, was unquestionably a great master of words.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

MR. H. W. LUCY has done many good things, but never anything better, in its way, than *A Diary of the Home-Rule Parliament*, 1892–1895 (CASSELL & Co.). It is no small feat to write of the proceedings in Parliament, as Mr. LUCY does day by day and week by week, in such a way as to make the reading delightful to ordinary readers; but to make the past records of the two Houses amusing and interesting, to breathe life into the dry bones of 1892–1895 is, I fancy, a record performance even for Mr. LUCY. He has done it in this book, and done it in a style so crisp and bright, with a humour so abundant, and with an observation so keen, that, as one reads it, one imagines that, for entertainment and sprightliness, the Houses of Commons and of Lords must be the finest "Halls" in all London. And there is no lack throughout the 480 pages of which the book is composed of those rarer gifts of sympathy and tolerance which have given to TOBY, M.P. (if one may say so in the pages which he adorns), the very highest place among Parliamentary chroniclers.

SHYLOCK ON THE SITUATION.

(Adapted by a London Merchant and a sorely-burdened Suburban Ratepayer, after studying the Agricultural Land Rating Bill.)

COMPANIES are but "Boards"; Ministers but men; there be land-rat(e)s and water-rat(e)s, land-thieves and water-thieves—I mean pirates (or high rates); and then there are the perils of water, gas, and schools. A man is, nevertheless (they think), sufficient!

* * * * *

My Lords and Commons, many a time and oft
In heavy ratio ye have "rated" me.
Upon my monies and my properties.
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe.
Again, it now appears, you need my help!
Merchant of Venice, Act I., Sc. 3 (*slightly altered*).

"DAY-AFTER-THE-FAIR."—There is a heading in the *Daily News*, "Last Night's Dinners." There 's something melancholy about the title. In four cases out of ten the remembrance of last night's dinner will be a happy one To those who have dined "not wisely but too well" last night's feast will not bear the reflections of the morning after. But the majority who have dined unwisely will not feel too well next morning, and when they see the feasts recorded under this head they will press their own, and wish they had never, &c., &c.

PROPOSED DECORATIONS FOR BOARD SCHOOLS AND POLICE COURTS.—In the first the study-rooms should be hung with Old Masters and their pupils; and in the second there should be some very good Constables.

THE GALLANT CONSTABLE.

["NELLIE and EMMA WOODVINE (aged five and two respectively) were up at the Marylebone Police-court yesterday charged with 'sleeping in the open air without visible means of subsistence.' Mr. PLOWDEN said it was 'perfectly preposterous to bring infants into Court. . . . Take them away.'"—*Westminster Gazette.*]

It was a gallant constable
Who paced the lonely beat.
With faltering step and quaking heart
He walked him down the street.

He thought with pain that pierced him
And made his blood run cold, [through
What he should do if he should meet
Some burglar bad and bold.

Some bad bold man who would not heed
The cry, "Oh! spare a copper!"
But would attack him ruthlessly
And bring him down a cropper.

Awhile he mused. If ne'er he caught
A criminal, of course,
A heartless superintendent would
Dismiss him from the force.

Just then, whilst moot he pondered there,
Aghast at his dilemma,
His eagle sight chanced to alight
On NELLIE and on EMMA.

Now NELLIE was a little lass
Who boasted summers five,
Whilst EMMA in this vale of woe
Two years had been alive.

These two upon a doorstep there—
An angel might have wept,
So young and yet so full of crime!—
Alas! these infants slept.

And slept right well. As later on
The constable swore roundly,
He caught them in the very act
And deed of sleeping soundly.

Ah! who can adequately pen
His deed of derring-do;
How, daring all, he took in charge
These babes of five and two.

Not his to count the risk he ran,
He felt his conscience bid
Him venture everything. It was
His duty, and he did.

But when the dawn broke o'er the land,
Unconscious of their fate,
These wicked infants had to come
Before a magistrate.

He was a horrid, feeling man,
And only chose to say,
"My Court is not a nursery,
So take the babes away."

But deeds of valour ever live,
And down to endless fame
Will go this constable without
A number or a name.

For when the goodman of the house
A story wants to tell, he
Will praise the man who dared to take
The sisters EMMA—NELLIE.

GOOD OMEN FOR RIGHT HON. SEC. OF COLONIES.—Revival of *Jo* (at Drury Lane Theatre), "always a movin' on!".

A DETAIL.

"IT SEEMS I'M CONSIDERED SO LIKE YOUR BROTHER FRED IN THE GUARDS, MRS. HOLDER, WE'RE ALWAYS BEING TAKEN FOR EACH OTHER. DO YOU SEE THE LIKENESS?"
"WELL, NO. HE DOES HIS *HAIR* SO DIFFERENTLY, YOU SEE!"

AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

No. 285. "*Dr. Williams*," and 563, "*The Bishop of London*," both by HUBERT HERKOMER, R.A., but separated by a difference of 278 pictures. Why could not Professor HUBERT have brought these two distinguished Doctors, one of Medicine, t'other of Divinity, together? There is some irony in the placing of these two admirable portraits so far apart. Both, being perfectly executed, might have been hung together. But what matter? they are immortalised.

No. 663. "*Sir Peter Eade, M.P., Mayor of Norwich, 1893-95*," by STANHOPE A. FORBES, A. Stan-Hope tells a flattering tale probably. The donors of this "presentation portrait" said to Mr. FORBES "Take 'EADE," and certainly he has been most careful, and the picture is thoroughly successful. The motto of this Mayor, with his magnificent robes and chain of office, ought to have been adapted from SIMS REEVES'S song, "My Chain! my Chain! my pretty Chain!" But STANHOPE A. FORBES didn't think of it.

No. 714. Approach with awe this picture of "*Esmé and Katherine, daughters of S. M. Robb, Esq.*," for it is painted by one of the "Elect." It is by "GEORGE H. BOUGHTON, R.A. elect." The daughters of *Robb* would come out well as a *steel* engraving.

No. 784. "*At the Giudecca, Venice.*" When the subject is Venice, be quite sure that the artist is WOODS. The only Woods to be found in Venice is HENRY WOODS, R.A.

No. 809. It shows a nice feeling, free from all jealous rivalry, that "*Her Majesty's Yeomen of the Guard*" should be painted by a "*Beadle*." And this "Beadle" is a "J.P."!! We were not aware till now that the two offices could be combined.

No. 917. "*Volunteers for a Boat's Crew.*" By THOMAS SOMERSCALES. A picture notable *per sea*.

No. 932. Mr. LANGLEY'S "*Bread-winners*" are coming across the sand. By the title, we suppose they are bringing back with them the "*roll* of the sea."

In our account of first visit to Royal Academy, No. 660 was given as "*The Shepherdess, &c.*," whereas the title of this charming picture, by Mr. GOODALL, R.A., ought to have been "*Cloud Shadows over Sea and Land*." How "The Shepherdess" got mixed up with it is inexplicable, except, perhaps, that "clouds" are frequently described as "fleecy."

SPORTIVE SONGS.

AN OLD CROQUET-PLAYER RUMINATES.

I LIKE to see a game revive
Like flower refreshed by rain,
And so I say, "May croquet thrive,
And may it live again!"
It brings back thoughts of long ago,
And memories most sweet,
When AMY loved her feet to show
In shoes too small, but neat.

I think I can see AMY now,
Her vengeful arm upraised
To croquet me to where a cow
Unheeding chewed and grazed.
And AMY'S prowess with the ball
Reminds me that her style
Was not so taking after all
As FANNY'S skill *plus* smile.

Yes! FANNY had a winsome laugh.
That round her mouth would wreath,
And make me wonder if her chaff
Was shaped to show her teeth.
They were so pretty, just like pearls
Set fast in carmine cave;
Still in the match between the girls
SELINA won the race.

SELINA had such lustrous eyes
Of real sapphire blue,
They seemed one's soul to mesmerise,
And looked one through and through.
Yet AGNES I cannot forget,
She brought me joy with pain.
I would that we had never met——
"Your stroke!" That voice! My JANE!

"AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM."—The *Pall Mall Gazette*, Wednesday, 13th inst., informed us that "Miss NETHERSOLE is back from the States, laden with wealth, and palpitating with a desire to show London that burning, passionate '*Carmen*' kiss which made such a sensation on the other side." Now, she will try the osculatory business on the right side, having finished with the other side, which is now, to her, the left side. We know that "Kissing goes by favour," and if this kiss smacks of the kind that takes with the public, then is Miss NETHERSOLE sure of success in London, and her "kiss" will be "the hit" of the piece.

THE RETRIBUTION OF CENTUARIES.—ABEL has already made hundreds of runs for Surrey when playing with a *cane*-spliced bat.

JONATHAN'S LATEST.

SHADE OF COLUMBUS (*aside*). "HAD I FORESEEN IT WOULD HAVE COME TO THIS—CARAMBA!—I WOULD NEVER HAVE DISCOVERED AMERICA!"

THE POLYGLOTOPERA.

Leaves from our Covent Gardenia Note-Book. Monday.—Opening of the Polyglotopera. *L'Ouverture de l'Opéra*, and if the success of the Opera is only up to that of the *Ouverture*, DRURIOLANUS OPERATICUS will be a prounder and happier man than ever. The event of to-night, and of the season, is the return of Brother JOHN, *alias* JEAN DE RESZKE, after unavoidable absence. House enthusiastic for Brother JOHN as *Romeo*, a big *Romeo* physically and operatically; and likewise evincing great delight at once again seeing Miss EMMA EAMES, who at end of first and second acts is recipient of floral tributes presented *viâ* Signor MANCINELLI, who is permitted to take a sniff at 'em, and then has to "stand and deliver" the floral tributes smilingly. Signor RINALDINI comes out strong as *Benvoglio*, a name originally intended by SHAKESPEARE as a quiz on his somewhat quarrelsome friend BEN JONSON. This fact not generally known, but interesting. At some time of the evening the National Anthem was sung, but this deponent has not as yet met anybody who was in time to hear it if it came first, or who stayed to hear it, if it came last. Everyone delights to see the ever-useful and ornamental Mlle. BAUERMEISTER as *Gertrude*. Good augury for season.

Le Roi Jean de Reszke (à lui-même). "L'opéra, c'est moi!"

Tuesday.—MASCAGNI'S *Cavalleria*, in Italian, and HUMPERDINCK'S *Hänsel and Gretel*, in English. The latter ought to have been in German. *Cavalleria Rusticana* with MAGGIE MACINTYRE as *Santuzza*. Hardly fair on MAGGIE so soon after CALVÉ. MAGGIE, in dark wig and with sunburnt face, unrecognisable. BAUERMEISTER, *Nurse Gertrude* last night, is *Mother Lucia* to-night, and afterwards appears as a good elf in HUMPERDINCK'S *Hänsel and Gretel*. This opera, in three acts, very delightful, but too long. Miss MARIE ELBA excellent as boy *Hänsel*, and Miss JESSIE HUDDLESTON equally good as *Gretel*; but for three acts to depend entirely on two Babes in the Wood, with a German nutcracker of a woodman, capitally played and sung by Mr. DAVID BISPHAM, with just a sprinkling of the very archest angels, pantomime witch, and fairies, thrown in, rather too much. So quitted at 11.30, humming HUMPERDINCK'S melodies, more or less correctly, and looking forward to

Wednesday.—DONIZETTI'S *La Favorita*—a heavy favourite—with *débutante* Madame MANTELLI, who has an enthusiastic reception, and is, as WAGSTAFF in the lobby observes, "physic'lly and mant'lli fitted for the part." Shan't speak to WAGGY again. But he will lurk in dark corner and pounce out upon me with "another good 'un." Signor ANCONA *prends le gâteau* as *Alfonso*. DRURIOLANUS COVENTGARDENENSIS, dropping into poetry, observes—

"CREMONINI as *Fernando*,
Does the part as well as man can do."

He pronounces "Man-can-do" as one word, and so mistaking him, an astute friend, ever in search of forthcoming novelty, inquires "who is MANCANDO?" whereat DRURIOLANUS winketh the other eye, and, putting portentous finger to nose, refuses to give him the tip (requiring it himself), and so gracefully retires. Beneficent BEVIGNANI conducts. Orchestra admirable.

The German Master Sandford and Miss Merton.

Thursday.—French and Italian night. GOUNOD'S *Philemon*, and LEONCAVALLO'S *Pagliacci*. Now, as we are in for Polyglottic season, probable announcements will be,—*Flying Dutchman*, in Dutch (single and double); *Faust*, in German; *L'Africaine*, in Spanish and Ethiopian; *Peter the Great*, in Russian; *Les Huguenots*, in French; *Falstaff*, in English; *Cavalleria*, in Sicilian *patois*; *Semiramide*, in Egyptian; *Norma*, in Welsh and Latin. N.B.—Any subscribers wishing for any characters in an opera to be sung in some particular dialect, will kindly give notice ten days beforehand, and their wishes will be attended to. Evidently to be a member, male or female, of the chorus at the Royal Polyglottic Opera, is "a liberal education in itself."

Friday Night.—*Faust.* JEAN DE RESZKE, *Faust*; t'other DE RESZKE, *Mephistopheles*. But, as ill luck would have it, T'other One was taken ill, and M. PLAIN SONG, otherwise PLANÇON, is his satisfactory substitute. Then at last moment Brother JEAN, it was reported, hurt his ankle, either in getting out of a bath or off a bicycle, and couldn't sing. So M. BONNARD came to the rescue of RESZKE, and appeared as *Faust*. But why should hurting his ankle have prevented the JOHNNIE from singing? Surely he might have come on in a bath-chair, and have made love to *Marguerite Eames* just as well seated as walking about. And think how touching the scene in the garden would have been, ending with invalided *Faust* wheeled by *Mephisto* up to the window, and stretching out from his bath-chair to embrace *Maggie*. However, this wasn't done, and BONNARD amply satisfied the *abonnés*, including critical Royalties. Opera went Faust-rate.

Miss EAMES wore a novelty in peasants' caps; her appearance in the cathedral scene being somewhat suggestive of old portraits of Mrs. SIDDONS with her head bound up as *Lady Macbeth* suffering from toothache. Poor *Marguerite!* Another trouble added to her woes!!

Saturday.—*Rentrés* of Madame ALBANI, with the two novelties, CREMONINI as *Lohengrin*, and MANTELLI as the Naughty 'Aughty *Ortruda* Intruder. Madame ALBANI always delightful as *Elsa*, "though personally," observes WAGSTAFF, taking me unawares, "I would rather see her as somebody else-a in another opera. This is to me a bit heavy. Nothing light or amusing, eh? There's no laugh in *Lohengrin*, though there's always a 'grin' in it." At sound of MANCINELLI rapping his desk sharply, and looking round severely straight at WAGSTAFF, the latter disappears, and, for this night only, is heard no more. End of first Polyglottic Opera week. DRURIOLANUS delighted. Public ditto.

"OUR BOBBY."

SUNG BY A SURREY MAN.

[ROBERT ABEL, the Surrey Cricketer, has already this season made three successive innings of over a hundred, one of them topping the two hundred.]

AIR—"*Comin' Thro' the Rye.*"

Gin our BOBBY meet a loose one
Coming, low or high,
Gin our BOBBY smite that loose one,
Won't that loose one fly!
Surrey's BOBBY, short and cobby,
Hath sure hand and eye;
And Surrey shouts when BOBBY A-BEL
Smacks up a century!

Gin our BOBBY hits a hundred
Three times running—well,
Surrey long time of her BOBBY
Will that story tell!
Ilka county has its crack bat,
Surrey man am I,
And Surrey's BOBBY bears the bell,
Yells Surrey in full cry!

ANTIQUARIAN AND MODERN.—The name of the Coroner at Bethnal Green is Dr. WYNN WESTCOTT. Evidently old family.

"A painted vest Prince VORTIGERN had on
Which from a naked Piet his grandsire won."

Dr. WYNN WESTCOTT clearly descended from Prince VORTIGERN, who took the name of "Win-West-got." Subsequently "Wynn Westcott." After searching among traditions of his ancient line—which should be a clothes-line—Dr. WYNN WESTCOTT is reported to have said, the other day, that, the union of two blind people who met, loved, married, and lived happily ever afterwards, was "the most remarkable marriage he had ever heard of." But why? Love is blind: and in a true love-match both parties are quite blind. And so may they always continue to be, blind, that is, to each other's faults.

"PENNY WISE."—For a golden penny of the thirteenth century somebody gave £250 at the famous MONTAGU collection sale. At this rate, some of us could live on two-pence for some considerable time, without extravagance.

A CRICKET CHIRP.—Mr. C. I. THORNTON is familiarly known as "Buns," doubtless from his current style.

THE HOUSE "IN LAAGER." (A COLONIAL NIGHT.)

WITH A VERY LITTLE TROUBLE SO MUCH FRESH INTEREST AND LOCAL COLOUR MIGHT BE ADDED TO DEBATE!

MASTER WILLIAM.

With Apologies to the Author of "Alice in Wonderland.")

[" Private letters received from Vienna report that the Emperor WILLIAM is by no means satisfied with the result of his interview with King HUMBERT at Venice. . . . The Emperor strongly recommended King HUMBERT to ignore England, and to seek to bring about a better understanding with Russia and France; but he utterly failed to change His Majesty's sentiments."—*Westminster Budget.*]

"YOU are young, Master WILLIAM," the old Sage said,
"And you are not a SOLOMON, quite;
And yet of Creation you 'd stand on the head—
Do you think, at your age, it 's polite?"

"As to youth," Master WILLIAM replied, "that 's your fun;
Just look at my birth—and my brain!!!
The rest of Creation, I'm certain, has *none*,
And its very last chance is my reign!"

"You *are* young!" said the Sage, "as I mentioned before,
And can hardly know what you are at;
But you sent a ridiculous wire to the Boer—
Now what *was* your object in that?"

"In my bib," said the boy, "I once read, on the sly,
The story of 'Little Jack Horner';
And now I've my finger in every-one's pie,
And every corner's *my* corner!"

WHAT OUR DRAMATIST HAS TO PUT UP WITH.

His Wife (reading a Sunday paper). "*À propos* OF *Hamlet*, THEY SAY HERE THAT YOU AND SHAKSPEARE REPRESENT THE VERY OPPOSITE POLES OF THE DRAMATIC ART!"

He. "AH! THAT 'S A NASTY ONE FOR SHAKSPEARE!"

"You *are* young!" said the Sage,
"and your judgment is weak,
Your schemes are as strong as
—chopped suet!
Yet you give the whole universe
lots of your cheek!
Do tell why the dickens you do
it!"

"My will," said the youth, "is the General Law!
And to argue with *me* leads to strife!
If the world will obey when *I* open *my* jaw,
Things will go—for the rest of *my* life!"

"You *are* young!" said the Sage.
"Do you really suppose
You can boss the Alliance for ever;
And balance the world like an eel on your nose?
What makes you conceive you're so clever?"

"I'm boss of three nations, but that 's not enough,"
Said the boy, "HUMBERT gives himself airs.
If he talks of the English *entente* and such stuff,
I shall just have to kick him downstairs!"

A MUSICAL NOTE.—Those who were unable to attend Herr WILLY BURMESTER'S second violin recital (it is a proof of modesty for one who is First Fiddle to play a second violin) have since lamented to the tune of "*Oh, Willie we have Missed You!*"

AXIOM IN THE DIVORCE COURT.—The promise of May is often the judgment of JUNE.

THE BOLD BUCCANEER.

(*An Up to-date Drawing room Ballad for Young Britons of "Elizabethan" Enthusiasm.*)

OH, if I'd my choice of a living,
I'd fain be a Bold Buccaneer,
Hot beans to the Boers gaily giving,
And beating the bumptious Mynheer.
A latter-day DRAKE, or a RALEIGH,
Is just what would suit me—you bet!
JOE'S scruples do make me feel crawly,
Me—and the *St. James's Gazette*.
I do hate these days of decorum.
Law, order, and all such small beer,
Rum and gunpowder mix for *my* jorum!
I'd fain be a Bold Buccaneer!

Queen BESS knew a man when she saw him;
Now if a true hero runs loose,
There 's lemon-tongued LABBY to "jaw" him,
And OOM PAUL to twist him a noose.
Oh! would *I* were Elizabethan,
And singeing the King o' SPAIN'S beard!
BESS nothing loved better to see than
One who Don or Devil ne'er feared.
She 'd have given the Dutchman a drubbing,
And made our new CECIL a Peer.
Now a raid sets us funking and blubbing,
I'd fain be a Bold Buccaneer!

Gallant DRAKE, we 're now told, was a pirate,
And RALEIGH a mere filibuster!
British *prestige* would stand at a high rate
If "Robbers" like them we could muster.
But now if a RHODES goes a-raiding,
He 's promptly thrown over—by JOE,
Midst crass Nonconformist upbraiding,
And Radical hullaballoo.
If a patriot mustn't turn raider,
For fear of some blooming Mynheer,
Let who will be Soldier or Trader,
I'd fain be a Bold Buccaneer!

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, May 11.—"Yes, TOBY, I am very much touched with my reception to-night," said Professor JEBB, polishing the nap of his hat with the cuff of his coat. "I am one of those persons who suffer on entrance to House of Commons by having established reputation outside. Of course on my own dunghill at Cambridge, if I please to crow, I expect to receive respectful attention. It's different here. Think I've heard you don't like Professors? Nevertheless, I had close and respectful hearing throughout my speech on Education Bill. It was the demonstration at the end that almost took my breath away with pleasure. Been speaking for more than half an hour. Had worked off one of my perorations. No use being niggardly, you know. Was at trouble to frame three; one in Greek; thought it would have good effect; would raise tone of debate.

"Consulted my colleague JOHN OF GORST. Said yes, it might do if I would make translation, have it printed in slips and sent round. Otherwise he was afraid the Borough Members would think I had dropped into Welsh. That hardly seemed worth while. So gave up the Greek; cut down perorations to bare two: delivered one, I trust not without grace, certainly not without effect. House not specially crowded at moment. Fancy they didn't know I was going to speak; benches opposite pretty full. When I came to last word of peroration Number One, Members opposite, unable any longer to control their feelings, with one accord leaped to their feet.

"There were forty of them at least. Have read of this kind of thing before, you know. During hot crises of Home-Rule Debate, the conclusion of Mr. G.'s great speeches, his entering and leaving the House at particular epochs, were made occasion for similar demonstrations. Members being on their feet waved their hats and cheered. Quite expected excited crowd opposite me to do the same. Fancy, they were afraid of SPEAKER interfering. Anyhow, each man of them stood with head craned forward, eye fixed with agonized glance on SPEAKER. Scene almost painful in its intensity; didn't desire to prolong it. So, bowing my acknowledgments, and with difficulty controlling my emotion, I went on again.

"At sound of my voice, Members opposite plumped down into their seats with such haste that one inadvertently put his hat on in the wrong place. This too much for friends near me, who burst into roar of laughter. Don't think it laughing matter. The whole scene

evidence of the honourable emotion that underlies ordinarily repellant appearance of House. It is profoundly moved by sound argument conveyed in lucid speech, occasionally rising to flights of eloquence. Wish I knew Member who audibly sat on his hat; would like secretly to convey to him a new one."

Pity SARK wasn't by to hear this. He would cheerfully have told the Professor he was labouring under a misapprehension; that the crowd of Members leaping to their feet thought he had finished his speech, and were merely trying to catch the SPEAKER'S eye. I, more tender-hearted, said nothing.

Business done.—Speech making round Education Bill.

Tuesday.—Spite of all hints to the contrary, there is a good deal of humour about the House of Commons. Nothing could be finer in its way than assumption on Opposition side of indignant grief at PRINCE ARTHUR'S determination to close to-night debate on Education Bill. Been dragging on forlornly through five nights—or is it five weeks? On successive days has been first order. House usually full at question time. Questions over, SPEAKER observes, "The Clerk will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day."

Instantly movement amongst serried ranks. Clerk's response quickens it. "The Education Bill; second reading." These simple words act upon gathering like a cry of "Fire!" Everybody makes for the door—everybody save JOHN OF GORST, who, as Minister in charge of Bill, must at least put on appearance of attending to debate; a Member of Front Opposition Bench deputed to represent a late and now absent Ministry; and some thirty or forty Members dispersed over benches. Every man of these last is clutching the paper he hopes to be able to read, hungrily watching the Member on his feet, anxious chiefly to know, not what he thinks of the four-shilling grant, the new local authority, or the Cowper-Temple clause, but at what precise minute he will sit down, and make opening for another.

Of course there have been variations, when some important or attractive speaker has taken up the running. But this the general aspect. Then comes PRINCE ARTHUR with the blessèd shears, and threatens to cut the thin spun thread. Instantly Opposition get their back up. If there is one thing Members to left of SPEAKER desire more earnestly than opportunity for taking part in debate, it is the luxury of hearing others speak. Their emotion so overpowering, cannot trust themselves to remain in their places through this the last prized opportunity. Through the long hours benches empty; aspect of place as dreary as heretofore. As for SQUIRE OF MALWOOD, much as he has suffered through a blameless life, this the unkindest cut of all. If there was for him one pathway on which Duty and Pleasure met, and walked hand in hand in placid delight, it was listening to debate on Education Bill. Hardly could he be torn away from Front Bench to eat a dry crust. As for a cigar, wouldn't look at one longer than his forefinger. Looking forward through it all to pleasure of himself contributing to the swelling tide of heart-stirring eloquence that had seethed around this stage of the Bill. Proposal to closure debate on the fifth night too much for him.

"If they're going to closure," said he, "let them gag me too."

So the noblest Roman of them all sat in statuesque silence, an attitude infinitely more eloquent than the most persuasive speech.

Business done.—Second reading Education Bill carried by 423 votes against 156.

Thursday.—The crowning distress of agriculture is, that it is personally represented in House of Commons by the plumpest of our fellow-kind, sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights. It has ever been thus. Years ago, the sorrows of the farmer used to be chanted by JAMES HOWARD, Member for Bedfordshire in the 1880-5 Parliament. He was himself something in the agricultural implement line, and had many means of knowing how farming business prospered or otherwise. Then, as now, it was generally otherwise. But when HOWARD was on his feet, his rosy face illumined with content, his paunchy person plainly full of beef or mutton, the whole thing came to have farcical air predestinating his advocacy to defeat.

Same in its way to-day with the more-than-ever ruined farmer. SQUIRE OF BLANKNEY, in charge of Rating Bill, can hardly be regarded as an object-lesson in agricultural distress. When resisting amendments, he does his best to put on haggard look. But success not thorough.

Then there's Major RASCH, with whose constituents in Essex things are so bad that he always walks to London at opening of Session. To-night he came up again with his dolorous tale. Once in happy Essex it was twenty tenants running after a farm; now it is twenty farms running after a tenant. As for the landlords their position is hopeless.

"Isn't there someone in SHAKSPEARE, TOBY, dear boy," he said, as he dallied over the basin of *soupe maigre* that serves for his evening meal, "who remarks, 'See what a rent the envious *Casca* made'? I don't remember at the moment what line of business *Casca* took, whether he owned land or houses. But I'll undertake to say that if he'll come down to Essex and put his money in land, he'll make no rent at all."

This doubtless not exaggeration of a sad case. Only to have it set forth by a man of RASCH'S appearance—plump, well set up, well dressed, to-night gay with bouquetted button-hole—there is certain incongruity about situation that fatally militates against effect of appeal. *Business done.*—In committee on Agricultural Rating Bill.

RUSS VERY MUCH IN URBE.

(By our Trusted Correspondent at the Coronation.)

YOU were quite right to let me go to Moscow in good time. As you had foreseen, apartments were at a premium. I have had the greatest difficulty in getting what is called over here a *shakdownski*. It is a sort of temporary shelter. I sleep on a *couchoff*—a kind of sofa—situated in what they quaintly term a *thirdfloorbackski*. My room is very near the clouds, *or*, to use Russian, the *skisky*. The place is filling fast, but at present most of the important personages are absent. The Duke and Duchess of CONNAUGHT will be here before this packet reaches you. As you know, H.R.H. commands at Aldershot, and the Duchess is the daughter of that gallant warrior who was known in the Franco-German War as "the Red Prince." All the military men of the various nationalities are wearing their uniforms. Those who come from England appear usually in scarlet.

And now, no doubt, you would like some account of Moscow. Well, a good deal of it has been re-built since it was burned to the basement in the time of NAPOLEON THE GREAT. When the fire to which I refer took place, the snow was lying thick on the ground—at the moment of writing the trees are in leaf and the flowers in bloom. Of course, I was not present at the *conflagrationoff* (Russian for "the fire"), but one of the oldest inhabitants tells me—so far as I can understand his lingo—that "the contrast between then and now was very marked." I have no great faith in Muscovite veracity, but this statement savours of truth.

Moscow is full of streets. Each street has several lights, placed in a sort of receptacle for gas jets, called *lampostoffs*. The city, as a whole, is something like Fulham *plus* a dash of Venice, with a *soupçon* of Paris thrown in. It is rather difficult to give a better description. The principal church is called the Kremlin. It has a gilded roof, and in this respect resembles to some extent the cross at the summit of the dome of St. Paul's.

Of course it is impossible to describe the Coronation until it has taken place—quite impossible. However, it is an open secret that the CZAR is to wear a crown on the occasion. He is to put this headgear on the top of his head, and then to take it off to put on the head of the CZARINA. Then there is to be much shouting, and some soldiers (belonging I am told to the Artillery) are to let off some cannons. This is the programme as at present arranged, but like all other programmes is, of course, subject to alteration.

For the moment, I do not think I can tell you any more. In my next I may be able to give you some account of the public monuments. To the best of my recollection they consist of the Russian Museum, the South Moscow Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, the Muscovite School of Mines (in Jermynoff Streetski), and the Earlscourtskoff Exhibition. I cannot verify these statements as, unfortunately, I have mislaid my guide-book. But of one thing I am certain, you were most wise in sending me to Russia, as I could not possibly have given you the above interesting account had I remained in Fleet Streetski, I should say Fleet Street. And with this remark I drop into Anglo-French and write "a do."

AMONG THINGS NOT JENNERALLY KNOWN.—The cost of an annual celebration of the First Innoculation at Bückeburg is defrayed, so the *Standard* correspondent informs us, "out of a fund established by a contemporary of Dr. JENNER, a Dr. FAUST." *A Doctor Faust*, forsooth! There can be but one *Dr. Faust*, and if so, wasn't innoculation the invention of *Mephistopheles?* This may add another feather to the cap of *Mephisto*, but it will serve as a powerful argument on the side of the angels, that is, the anti-vaccinators, and therefore the anti-Faust-and-Mephistopheles combination.

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